

Message Text

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PAGE 01 REYKJA 01694 291821Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 (ISO) W
-----003533 292338Z /47

R 291509Z NOV 77
FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7906
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY OSLO
USMISSION USNATO
COMICEDEFOR

UNCLAS REYKJAVIK 1694

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MARR, PINT, IC
SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER COMMENTS ON REYKJAVIK PRIMARY RESULTS
AND DEFENSE

REF: REYKJAVIK 1680

1. PRIME MINISTER GEIR HALLGRIMSSON USED TWO OCCASIONS
NOVEMBER 25 TO GIVE HIS VIEWS ON OUTCOME OF INDEPENDENCE
PARTY PRIMARY IN REYKJAVIK LAST WEEK. PM'S SECOND PLACE
SHOWING WAS HIT BY HOSTILE TELEVISION INTERVIEWER WHO
ALSO GLOATED OVER OVERWHELMING ENDORSEMENT GIVEN
ISSUE OF NATO BASE COMPENSATION, MEASURE WHICH PM STRONGLY
OPPOSES. HALLGRIMSSON ALSO ADDRESSED ISSUES OF COM-
PENSATION AND DEFENSE AT IP COUNCIL MEETING ON SAME DAY.

2. AT THE IP COUNCIL PM REAFFIRMED TO PARTY MEMBERS HIS
FIRMLY-HELD VIEW THAT PRESENCE OF ICELAND DEFENSE FORCE
(IDF) IS IN INTEREST OF ICELAND. NATO TIES HELP ASSURE
ICELAND'S FREEDOM, INDEPENDENCE, AND SECURITY, HE MAIN-
TAINED, AND GOI DOES NOT PAY ONE KRONA FOR THIS PRO-
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TECTION. PM CITED STATISTICS POINTING OUT SHARE OF GNP
PAID BY DANES, NORWEGIANS AND AMERICANS FOR DEFENSE AND
SAID IF GOI SPENT AS LITTLE AS 3 PERCENT OF ITS GNP,
COST WOULD BE 13.5 BILLION KRONUR (\$64 MILLION) ANNUALLY.
IF ICELAND HAD SAME PROPORTION OF POPULATION IN MILITARY
AS DO OTHER NEARBY NATO MEMBERS, 2300 ICELANDERS WOULD BE IN
SERVICE RESULTING IN MAJOR DRAIN ON LABOR POOL. HALLGRIMSSON

DECLARED THAT NATIONAL DEFENSE HAS BEEN BEDROCK OF PARTY FOREIGN POLICY FOR THIRTY YEARS, AND NOTED THAT HAD LEFT GOVERNMENT (1971-74) REMAINED IN OFFICE, ICELAND WOULD NOW BE DEFENSELESS AND NO LESS A TARGET FOR AGGRESSION.

3. PM CONTINUED THAT GOI WANTS IDF TO REMAIN, NOT FOR SAKE OF US BUT FOR ICELAND'S OWN PROTECTION WHICH IT IS RECEIVING COSTFREE. ICELANDERS, PM SAID, HAVE NO MORE RIGHT TO ASK WHAT THEIR COUNTRY IS WORTH IN TERMS OF COMPENSATION THAN THEY MAY ASK WHAT NORWAY, GERMANY OR US IS WORTH. NATO IS PART OF LINKS BETWEEN ICELAND AND OTHER COUNTRIES OF EUROPE, HE ADDED, AND NO PRICE TAG CAN BE PLACED ON THAT.

4. IN TELEVISION APPEARANCE, HALLGRIMSSON FACED INTERVIEWER (FROM THE FAR LEFTIST PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE) WHO GOADED HIM ON OUTCOME OF IP REFERENDUM IN WHICH OVER 80 PERCENT OF VOTERS SUPPORTED IDF CONTRIBUTIONS FOR ROAD BUILDING IN ICELAND. PM SAID THAT VOTE DID NOT GIVE TRUE PICTURE OF HOW ICELANDERS FELT ON COMPENSATION, AND HE REMAINED FIRM OPPONENT OF PROPOSAL. HE DECLARED HE WOULD NEVER SEEK COMPENSATION, AND IF VOTERS WANTED IP TO FOLLOW THAT COURSE, THEY SHOULD STRIKE HIS NAME FROM PARTY LIST.

5. INTERVIEWER ALSO SUGGESTED THAT RESULT OF PARTY VOTE PUTTING PM IN SECOND POSTION ON LIST (REFTEL) WAS RE-UNCLASSIFIED

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PUDIATION OF HIS LEADERSHIP, AND HE ASKED IF HALLGRIMSSON WOULD RESIGN. AN ANGRY PM RESPONDED THAT PARTY CHAIRMANSHIP IS DETERMINED BY ENTIRE IP IN CONVENTION AND NOT IN A SINGLE PRIMARY. PM WOULD THEREFORE CONTINUE AS CHAIRMAN. HE ARGUED THAT HE WON SAME SHARE OF PRIMARY VOTES AS HE DID IN 1974 AND CONSEQUENTLY WOULD NOT AGREE THAT OUTCOME WAS REPUDIATION. BY SAME TOKEN, HIS CHAIRMANSHIP DOES NOT ENTITLE HIM TO FIRST PLACE ON TICKET AND HE WOULD NOT SEEK TO SEIZE POSITION FROM RIGHTWING IP CRITIC WHO WON ONLY 400 MORE VOTES THAN HE. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS ABOUT BITTERNESS OF ONE IP INCUMBENT MP WHO FINISHED EIGHTH ON LIST (WITH PARTY PRRSENTLY HOLDING EIGHT REYKJAVIK SEATS), HALLGRIMSSON SAID MP IN QUESTION WAS GOOD MAN WHO COULD EASILY FIND JOB AFTER NEXT YEAR - THEREBY GIVING IMPRESSION THAT PARTY WAS ALL BUT CONCEDING LOSS OF THAT SEAT.

6. PRESS COMMENTARIES ON PM'S REMARKS CAME IN EDITORIALS IN IP DAILIES MORGUNBLADID AND VISIR WHICH SECONDED HALLGRIMSSON'S REMARKS ON NECESSITY FOR IDF PRESENCE. MORGUNBLADID RECALLED ITS NOVEMBER 19 EDITORIAL (REFTEL) AND REITERATED THAT ICELANDERS SHOULD BE PLEASED

THAT THEY HAVE SECURITY AND DEFENSE AT NO COST TO THEMSELVES.
VISIR, IN FIRST EDITORIAL COMMENT DURING CURRENT DEBATE ON
COMPENSATION ISSUE, SAID COMPENSATION IN FORM OF ROAD OR HOSPITAL
CONSTRUCTION HAS NO PLACE IN LIGHT OF WORLD SITUATION AND
DECLARED THAT NO PRICE TAG COULD BE PUT ON ICELAND.
BLAKE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRIME MINISTER, ELECTION RESULTS, MILITARY PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 29-Nov-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770442-0847
Format: TEL
From: REYKJAVIK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977118/aaaaagky.tel
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Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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TAGS: MARR, PINT, IC
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vdkgvwkey: odbs://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5a19b71e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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